

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

09/982,542

Examiner

Hai Vo

Applicant(s)

OHASHI, TSUNEAKI

Art Unit

1771

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to 12/01/03.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 2 and 10-16.
3. ☒ The drawings filed on 18 October 2001 are accepted by the Examiner.
4. ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
 6. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
7. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
7. ☐ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____

Elizabeth M. Cole
 ELIZABETH M. COLE
 PRIMARY EXAMINER

REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: The art rejections and the double patenting rejections in the Office Action mailed on 10/08/2003 are considered moot in view of the cancellation of claims 1 and 3-9. Of the references of record, the most pertinent are Matsubara (US 6,142,386), Mehrotra et al (US 5,382,273) and Komatsu et al (US 5,744,410).

Matsubara teaches a silicon nitride sintered body having excellent wear resistance and an open porosity of 0.02% by volume or less (abstract, column 2, lines 33-35) wherein the content of Al₂O₃ in the sintered body is about 1 wt% (table 1). Likewise, the content of Al itself in the sintered body is more than 50 ppm.

Mehrotra teaches a silicon nitride sintered body useful for use as a cutting tool having a porosity of less than 0.2 % by volume (abstract) wherein the content of elements in Group 1a, and Groups 4a-3b is more than 50 ppm (table III).

Komatsu teaches a silicon nitride sintered body useful for use as a substrate of a semiconductor device having a porosity of at most 2.5% by volume (abstract) and thermal conductivity of 10 W/m.K (table 3, example 48). Komatsu discloses the sintered body further comprising lanthanum (column 6, lines 16-18). Komatsu discloses the content of elements in the Group 1a, 4a-3b is about 0.15 wt% (examples 1-3).

Accordingly, since the prior art fails to teach or suggest a corrosion resistive member set forth in the claim wherein the total content of elements in Group 1a and Groups 4a-3b of the Periodic Table in the silicon nitride sintered body is lower than 50 ppm by weight, the instant claims are deemed allowable.

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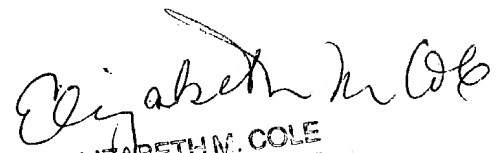
Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Hai Vo whose telephone number is (571) 272-1485. The examiner can normally be reached on M,T,Th, F, 7:00-4:30 and on alternating Wednesdays.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Terrel Morris can be reached on (571) 272-1478. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

HV


ELIZABETH M. COLE
PRIMARY EXAMINER